



# WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler  
District 32



Room 433 - State Capitol Bldg. - Jefferson City, MO 65101 - Phone: (573) 751-2306

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**September 12, 2003**

**For additional information contact:**  
**Barbara Mustoe**  
**(573) 751-2306**

## **MISSOURI SENATE FAILS TO OVERRIDE VETOES OF TWO KEY ECONOMIC BILLS, VOTE IS LARGELY ALONG PARTY LINES**

This was an historic week for the Missouri General Assembly, full of highs and lows. For the first time in Missouri's history, lawmakers succeeded in overriding three vetoes by a governor, however, we were unable to get enough votes to override the vetoes of two key economic development bills.

I served as co-sponsor for both pieces of legislation. The first, Senate Bill 280, would have made a variety of changes to the state's tort laws.

The legislation would have placed a cap on "pain and suffering" award in injury lawsuits and made a variety of other changes aimed at reducing medical malpractice premiums.

SB 280 would have limited what is commonly known as "venue shopping," where lawyers seek to move a suit to a district where juries give higher awards. This often results in insurance companies raising malpractice insurance rates. Across the country, thousands of doctors have been forced to leave their profession because they simply cannot afford these rising costs.

For the second time this year, hundreds of physicians assembled at the Capitol to lobby on behalf of this reform measure. Some even carried signs reading: "Will the last doctor in Missouri please turn out the lights?"

A two-thirds majority, or 23 votes, is needed to override a governor's veto. This measure was defeated by a vote of 21-12, with the vote falling largely along party lines.

Senate Bill 69, which would have established a Small Business Regulatory Board, met a similar fate. With a vote of 20-12, several Democratic senators who voted for this bill in May, turned around and voted to uphold the governor's veto.

The Small Business Regulatory Fairness Board would have conducted hearings and solicited input from small businesses regarding enforcement by regulatory state agencies. The board would have had an impact on small businesses by offering them structural input to regulatory writing.

Small business is truly the backbone of our state's economy. A vibrant and growing small business sector is critical to jump-starting Missouri's sagging economy.

In August, Gov. Holden signed an executive order enacting some of the provisions found in SB 69. However, the executive order is only a pale version of the law passed by the General Assembly and I don't believe it will have any real impact on the small business owners of this state.

Lawmakers were successful in overriding the governor's vetoes of legislation that creates a 24-hour waiting period on abortion, allows Missourians with a proper license to carry a concealed weapon, and restricts the ability of governments to sue gun manufacturers.

I am proud to have voted with the majority to override all of these vetoes.

With these overrides, Bob Holden becomes the first governor in Missouri's history to have three of his vetoes overridden. In fact, previously a total of only seven overrides had been successful.

With substantive issues in both veto and special sessions now dispensed with, lawmakers will return to their districts and their interim committee obligations until the General Assembly convenes in January.

-end-